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ACTION PRM-01

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AF-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00
	INL-01	DODE-00	DOEE-00	ANHR-00	WHA-00	SRPP-00	DS-00
	EB-00	EUR-00	OIGO-02	FBIE-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00
	INR-00	IO-00	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NEA-00	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00
	IIP-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6301
INFO USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE
COMMISSIONER USINS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR PRM A/S TAFT, PRM/A, PRM/AAA, AF/S, AF/PD,
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WHA/CCA

NAIROBI FOR REFCOORD AND INS

ROME FOR INS

LONDON FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/13/10
TAGS: [PREF](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [ZI](#) [CU](#)
SUBJECT: UNHCR LAWYER SKETCHES OUT POSSIBLE END GAME FOR
CUBAN DOCTORS

REF: HARARE 3162

CLASSIFIED BY DCM EARL M. IRVING FOR REASONS 1.5 B/D.

[11.](#) (C) A DOWNCAST MICHAEL SALOMONS (PROTECT) BRIEFED DCM
ON JUNE 13 ON WHAT HE VIEWS AS A WORSENING OUTLOOK FOR
THE RESOLUTION OF THE CASES OF CUBAN DOCTORS LEONEL
CORDOVA RODRIGUEZ AND NORIS DEL CARMEN PENA MARTINEZ.
SALOMONS, WHO CONTINUES TO GET THE RUNAROUND FROM
ZIMBABWEAN AUTHORITIES, ALSO SPECULATED THAT THE UNITED
NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR) IN GENEVA
MIGHT DROP THE CASE. HE EXPLAINED THAT UNHCR HEAD OGATA
HAD VISITED HAVANA RECENTLY IN AN EFFORT TO SECURE
CUBA'S ACCESSION TO THE 1951 CONVENTION CONCERNING
REFUGEES. MS. OGATA FOUND FIDEL CASTRO IMPRESSIVE,
ACCORDING TO SALOMONS. CASTRO IN TURN PROMISED MS.
OGATA "HUNDREDS" OF CUBAN DOCTORS TO ASSIST UNHCR, A
DANGLED ATTRACTION WHICH MAY NOW BE INFLUENCING MS.
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OGATA'S PROFESSIONAL AND IMPARTIAL VIEW OF THE FATE OF
THE DOCTORS BEING HELD IN LOCAL DETENTION.

[12.](#) (C) SALOMONS ALSO TOLD US THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED
THAT THE QUESTION OF THE RELEASE OF THE CUBAN DOCTORS
COULD BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE CABINET IN ITS REGULAR
WEEKLY MEETING ON JUNE 13. IF THE CABINET DOES NOT ACT
ON IT TODAY, SALOMONS THOUGHT IT WOULD ONLY RETURN TO
THE ISSUE OF THE CUBANS' PLIGHT AFTER THE ELECTIONS. HE
SPOKE OMINOUSLY OF A CUBAN TRANSPORT PLANE BEING MOVED
FROM GABON TO ZIMBABWE IMMINENTLY TO FORCIBLY REPATRIATE
THE PAIR TO CUBA.

[13.](#) (C) SALOMONS THOUGHT THAT IF THE U.S. REALLY WISHED
TO GRANT ASYLUM TO THE CUBANS, THEN IT SHOULD ENGAGE
DIRECTLY WITH PRESIDENT MUGABE, BECAUSE HE BELIEVED
CASTRO WAS ALREADY DOING SO. LEFT TO UNHCR, THE CASE
MIGHT GO TWO WAYS. ZIMBABWE WOULD GRANT TO THE UNHCR
"MANDATE STATUS", MEANING THE UN COULD RETURN THE PAIR
TO CUBA, RELYING ON THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT'S PUBLIC
PROMISE THAT NO HARM WOULD BEFALL THEM AS THEY HAD
COMMITTED NO CRIME, OR, THE PAIR COULD BE SETTLED IN A

THIRD COUNTRY. EVEN THOUGH SALOMONS HAD ARGUED THAT THE TWO CUBANS WERE BONA FIDE REFUGEES, HE THOUGHT THE USG WOULD HAVE TO PRESS UNHCR HARD TO ESTABLISH THAT THEY HAD A WELL-FOUNDED FEAR OF PERSECUTION IF RETURNED TO THEIR HOMELAND. SALOMONS STATED THAT THE CUBANS HAD BEEN MODEL CITIZENS IN CUBA AND THAT THEIR CLAIM FOR REFUGEE STATUS ONLY AROSE AFTER THEY MADE ANTI-CASTRO REMARKS TO THE NEWSPAPERS IN ZIMBABWE. FINALLY, SALOMONS PROPOSED A "LOCAL SETTLEMENT", IN, WHICH THE CUBANS MIGHT BE

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ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN ZIMBABWE NOT FOR TWO WEEKS, BUT FOR PERHAPS A YEAR, AS HAD BEEN THE CASE WITH CUBAN DOCTORS WHO DEFECTED IN VENEZUELA.

14. (C) IN WHAT WE VIEW AS A POSSIBLE FURTHER MUDDYING OF THE WATERS, THE TEACHER (MADZIYA) WITH WHOM THE CUBANS HAD BEEN STAYING TELEPHONED THE EMBASSY TODAY. HE TOLD US THAT A POLICE SERGEANT CHIDHARARA AT GOROMONZI DETECTION CENTER HAD BEEN IN TOUCH TO REQUEST THAT MADZIYA TURN OVER THE CUBANS' PASSPORTS, MONEY AND ANY OTHER BELONGINGS IN HIS POSSESSION. HE DID NOT STATE IF THE REASON BEHIND HIS REQUEST WAS AN IMPENDING DEPARTURE FROM ZIMBABWE, OR A LIKELY EXTENDED STAY AS A GUEST OF HIS FACILITY.

15. (C) COMMENT: SALOMONS CAME LATE TO THE REALIZATION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE CASE, AS EVIDENCED BY HIS OFFHAND COMMENT TO INS OFFICER VARSANI THAT HE WAS SURPRISED BY THE AMOUNT OF PUBLICITY THAT THE CUBANS' CASE HAS GENERATED. SALOMONS APPEARS UNABLE TO ANTICIPATE OR DECRYPT THE POLITICAL ENDGAMES BEING PLAYED BY THE GOVERNMENT, AND UNFORTUNATELY HIS MALADROITNESS TRANSLATES INTO ANOTHER WEAK LINK IN THE CHAIN. NEVERTHELESS, WE CANNOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBLE SCENARIOS HE HAS OUTLINED, OR THE VALIDITY OF HIS

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O 131502Z JUN 00
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INFO USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE
COMMISSIONER USINS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
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INFORMATION REGARDING MS. OGATA AND FACTORS AFFECTING HER ACTIONS. END COMMENT.

MCDONALD

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